

Message Text

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ACTION EUR-12

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 EB-08 CIAE-00 PM-04 H-01 INR-07
L-03 NSAE-00 NSC-05 PA-01 PRS-01 SP-02 SS-15
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R 271555Z APR 77
FM USMISSION NATO
TO SECSTATE WASHDC 3196
SECDEF WASHDC
INFO AMEMBASSY BRUSSELS
AMEMBASSY ROME
USNMR SHAPE
USCINCEUR VAIHINGEN GER

C O N F I D E N T I A L USNATO 2447

BRUSSELS FOR POL/MIL, MR NAVEZ

E.O. 11652: GDS
TAGS: MARR NATO
SUBJECT; INFRASTRUCTURE CEILING INCREASE

REF: (A) BRUSSELS 04046, 221542Z APR 77; (B) USNATO 2309,
211459Z APR 77

1. PENDING WASHINGTON VIEWS ON REFS A AND B, WE HAVE
REACHED AN UNDERSTANDING WITH EMBASSY BRUSSELS ON THE TWO
POINTS AT ISSUE:

A. IT HAD BEEN OUR IMPRESSION, BASED ON RECORD STATE-
MENTS BY THE BELGIAN INFRASTRUCTURE REP (COL BAEYENS)
THAT THE GOB WAS UNLIKELY TO ACT ON THE INFRASTRUCTURE
INCREASE BEFORE THE ELECTIONS BUT MIGHT DO SO SHORTLY
THEREAFTER. REF A NOW MAKES IT CLEAR THAT WE MUST WAIT
OUT A "CARETAKER" PHASE BEFORE A NEW GOVERNMENT IS
ACTUALLY IN PLACE AND IN A POSITION TO MAKE POLICY OR TO
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APPROACH THE PARLIAMENT. WE CONSTRUE THAT TO NOW MEAN
NO BELGIAN DECISION ON INFRASTRUCTURE BEFORE JUNE.

B. WE HAVE CLARIFIED THE POINT MADE IN PARA 4, REF A,
REFERRING TO OUR PARA 3, REF B. IN PRINCIPLE, THE
NOTION THAT NATO MIGHT OFFER PRIORITY GUIDANCE TO NATIONS
ON MAJOR CONCURRENT OUTLAYS IS NOT UNREASONABLE. IN
FACT, THE CURRENT ISSUES (INFRASTRUCTURE, AWACS, F-16,
HAWK BELT) ARE TOO MATURE AND HAVE BECOME TOO ENTANGLED
WITH OTHER ISSUES (E.G., THE AWACS AND TANK

LINKAGE) FOR STRAIGHT-FORWARD PRIORITY TREATMENT BY THE NATO MILITARY AUTHORITIES. BEYOND THIS, THERE IS AT PRESENT NO PRACTICAL MECHANISM OR PROCEDURE FOR MANAGING NATO MILITARY PRIORITIES ON SUCH A BROAD SCALE AND IT SEEMS UNLIKELY THAT THE MILITARY COMMITTEE WOULD TAKE ON THE JOB. THE BELGIANS MUST BE PERSUADED TO RECOGNIZE THESE FACTS OF LIFE.

2. IF, AS IS NOW CLEAR, THE GOB CANNOT TAKE ITS POSITION ON THE INFRASTRUCTURE CEILING INCREASE BEFORE JUNE, IT IS EQUALLY CLEAR THAT NO FINAL ACTION CAN BE TAKEN IN THE MAY MINISTERIAL. THIS MEANS THAT AGREEMENT ON THE INCREASE WILL COME TOO LATE TO BE CONSIDERED IN NATO MILITARY PLANNING FOR SLICE XXIX, THE WORKING DRAFT OF WHICH IS SCHEDULED TO BE PUBLISHED IN JUNE. IT BECOMES THEREFORE ALL THE MORE URGENT THAT ITALY JOIN THE MAJORITY TO COMPLETE A UNITED FRONT IN ORDER TO BRING MAXIMUM ALLIANCE PRESSURE TO BEAR ON THE GOB. THUS ISOLATED, THE BELGIANS MAY BE STIMULATED TO ACT IMMEDIATELY UPON FORMATION OF THE NEW GOVERNMENT AND PERHAPS EVEN BEFORE. IT MAY ALSO BE NECESSARY FOR THE US TO RECOMMEND TO MINISTERS THAT THEY INVITE SYG LUNS TO APPROACH THE GOB IN ORDER TO (A) URGE EXCEPTIONAL ACTION ON THE INFRASTRUCTURE FUNDING, AND (B) TO MAKE THE POINTS SUMMARIZED IN PARA 1.B. ABOVE.

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3. THIS MESSAGE HAS BEEN COORDINATED WITH AMEMBASSY BRUSSELS.STREATOR

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